WE CLAIM:

1.   A conferencing method for providing a conference call for a subscriber in a telecommunications system comprising:

receiving input signals, in a switch servicing a phone of the subscriber, from the phone of the subscriber when the subscriber requests the conference call;

activating a trigger in the switch that the received input signals are requesting the conference call based on a first string of the received input signals;

setting up the conference call in a conferencing bridge in response to the activated trigger;

routing the phone of the subscriber to the conference call in the conferencing bridge;

obtaining a group of phone numbers of participants from a database, the group of phone numbers at least identified by a second string of the received input signals;

calling from the conferencing bridge each phone number of a phone for each participant in the obtained group;

connecting the phone of each participant in the conference call in the conferencing bridge when answered in response to calling.

2.   The method of claim 1 wherein the input signals are a dual-tone multifrequency (DTMF) series of key inputs.

3.   The method of claim 2 wherein the first string of the input signals starts with a "#" (pound) key input followed by at least one additional key input signal.

4.   The method of claim 1 wherein the second string of signals corresponds to one of a plurality of groups for the subscriber

in the database, each of said plurality of groups corresponding to a different group of phone numbers of participants.

5.   The method of claim 1 wherein setting up the conference call comprises:

sending a message from the switch to a conferencing system that the subscriber is initiating the conference call, the message including at least the second string;

determining a conference profile for the subscriber;

selecting the conferencing bridge for the conference call based on the obtained conference profile.

6.   The method of claim 5 wherein the message further contains a phone number of phone of the subscriber.

7.   The method of claim 5 further comprising:

validating the subscriber to verify that the subscriber is allowed to make the conference call.

8.   The method of claim 1 wherein the trigger is a dialed number trigger in the switch.

9.   The method of claim 1 wherein obtaining the group of phone numbers further comprises:

using the phone number of the subscriber with the second string of input signals to obtain the group of numbers.

10.   The method of claim 1 wherein obtaining the group of phone numbers further comprises:

using the phone number of the subscriber with the second string of input signals to obtain the group of numbers.

11.   The method of claim 1 wherein calling each phone number of each participant further comprises:

presenting the phone number of the subscriber to the phone of each participant as each participant is called so that the said each participant is notified that the subscriber is calling.

12.   The method of claim 1 wherein calling each phone number of each participant further comprises:

playing a voice message to said each participant when each said participant answers the aforesaid phone, the message informing each said participant of the conference call;

receiving at least one input signal from the phone of each said participant to join the conference call.

13.   A conferencing method for providing a conference call for a subscriber in a telecommunications system comprising:

receiving input signals, in a switch servicing a phone of the subscriber, from the phone of the subscriber when the subscriber requests the conference call, the phone of the subscriber having a phone number;

sending a message from the switch to a conferencing system in response to receiving the input signals;

setting up the conference call in a bridge in the conferencing system in response to sending the message;

routing the phone of the subscriber to the conference call in the bridge;

obtaining a group of phone numbers of participants from a database containing at least one group, the group identified by the received input signals and the phone number of the subscriber;

calling from the conferencing system each phone number corresponding to a phone for each participant in the obtained group;

connecting the phone of each participant called to the
20   bridge when answered in response to calling.

14.   The method of claim 13 wherein the input signals
comprise a first string of the input signals starts with a "#" (pound) key
input followed by at least one additional key input signal.

15.   The method of claim 13 wherein the input signals
comprise a second string of signals corresponding to the at least one
group for the subscriber in the database, each said at least one group
corresponding to a different group of phone numbers of participants.

16.   The method of claim 13 further comprising:
        validating the subscriber to verify that the subscriber is
allowed to make the conference call.

17.   The method of claim 13 wherein calling each phone
number of each participant further comprises:
        presenting the phone number of the subscriber to the
phone of each participant as each participant is called so that the said
5   each participant is notified that the subscriber is calling.

18.   The method of claim 17 wherein calling each phone
number of each participant further comprises:
        playing a voice message to said each participant when
each said participant answers the aforesaid phone, the message
5   informing each said participant of the conference call;
        receiving at least one input signal from the phone of
each said participant to join the conference call.

19.   A conferencing method for providing a conference call
for a subscriber in a telecommunications system comprising:

receiving input signals from a phone in the telecommunications system when the subscriber requests the

5   conference call;

setting up the conference call for the subscriber in a bridge in a conferencing system in the telecommunications system in response to receiving the input signals;

routing the phone of the subscriber to the conference

10   call in the bridge;

obtaining a group of phone numbers of participants from a database containing at least one group, the group at least identified by the received input signals;

calling from the conferencing system each phone

15   number corresponding to a phone for each participant in the obtained group;

connecting the phone of each participant called to the bridge when answered in response to calling from the conferencing system.

20. . The method of claim 19 further comprising:

enabling the subscriber to provide the database with new second strings and with information for new groups corresponding to the new second strings, the information containing at

5   least the phone numbers of participants in the new groups.

21.   A conferencing method for providing a conference call for a subscriber in a telecommunications system comprising:

enabling the subscriber, in a network in the telecommunications system, to subscribe to the conferencing method,

5   the network servicing a phone of the subscriber;

assigning a conference code for the phone of the subscriber after the subscriber subscribes;

providing the subscriber with Internet access to a database in a conferencing system in the telecommunications system after the subscriber subscribes;

storing in the database information for at least one call group of participants for the subscriber in response to providing the subscriber access, the stored information based at least on a phone number of the phone of the subscriber, the information for each at least one call group including at least a unique call group code and phone numbers of each participant;

dialing the conference code and the unique call group code in the phone of the subscriber when the subscriber places the conference call to the call group corresponding to the unique call group code after storing the database information;

setting up the conference call in the conferencing system in response to dialing the conference code by (1) routing the phone of the subscriber to the conferencing system and (2) calling each phone number of each participant in the aforesaid call group in response to dialing the unique call group code.